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NAVAL WARFARE
ON THE
GREAT LAKES
1812-1814

By

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THE RYERSON CANADIAN HISTORY READERS

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NAVAL WARFARE ON THE GREAT LAKES, 1812-1814

ON LAKE ONTARIO

AT THE time of the declaration of war in 1812, the British had on Lake Ontario five armed vessels,—the *Royal George*, the *Prince Regent*, the *Duke of Gloucester*, the *Seneca*, and the *Simcoe*, carrying over sixty guns; and on Lake Erie,—the *Queen Charlotte*, the *Lady Prevost*, the *Hunter*, the *Little Belt*, and the *Chippewa*, with an equal number of guns. But the guns of these vessels were of small size, mostly six-pounders. The ships were manned by what was known as the Provincial Marine, a body of fine sailors, who, however, were inexperienced in naval warfare. Commodore Earle was in charge of this force, and under his direction it did good work transporting troops and forwarding supplies.

In October, Commodore Isaac Chauncey arrived at Sackett's Harbour to create an American naval force and conduct naval operations. On November 6th, he ventured into the open lake with the brig *Oneida* and

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six schooners. Chauncey hoped to capture the *Royal George*, which was sailing from Fort George for Kingston. But the British ship passed the American fleet in the night, and, although chased on the next morning, safely reached harbour. The Kingston batteries and the American vessels kept up a heavy fire for a time but a snowstorm made Chauncey cease his attack.

As the American fleet sailed away, they sighted the schooner *Simcoe*, Captain Richardson, coming down the lake. Fearing capture, Richardson tried to run his vessel on Amherst Island, but a change of wind prevented this. He then boldly decided to try to run through the American fleet. Under a fresh breeze the little *Simcoe*, for five miles, plowed her way. She was a flying target, hard to hit, but was struck again and again; her hull was pierced with balls and her sails torn, but her gallant commander never thought of surrendering. She passed the enemy fleet and was rounding into harbour, when a shot pierced her hull beneath the water-line and she at once sank. But her crew took to the boats and with a rousing cheer, in which the

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people of Kingston—who had crowded to the water front to watch the chase—joined, landed in safety.

For the rest of the year Commodore Earle was forced to keep his little fleet in the shelter of the Kingston batteries. During the winter several larger vessels were built and a fair-sized fleet was ready when the campaign opened in the spring.

The force, too, was strengthened by the arrival, in March, 1813, of three captains of the Royal Navy, five lieutenants, and a few seamen. In May, Commodore Sir James Yeo, who was to have charge of naval operations, came with four captains, eight lieutenants, twenty-four midshipmen, and 450 British sailors.

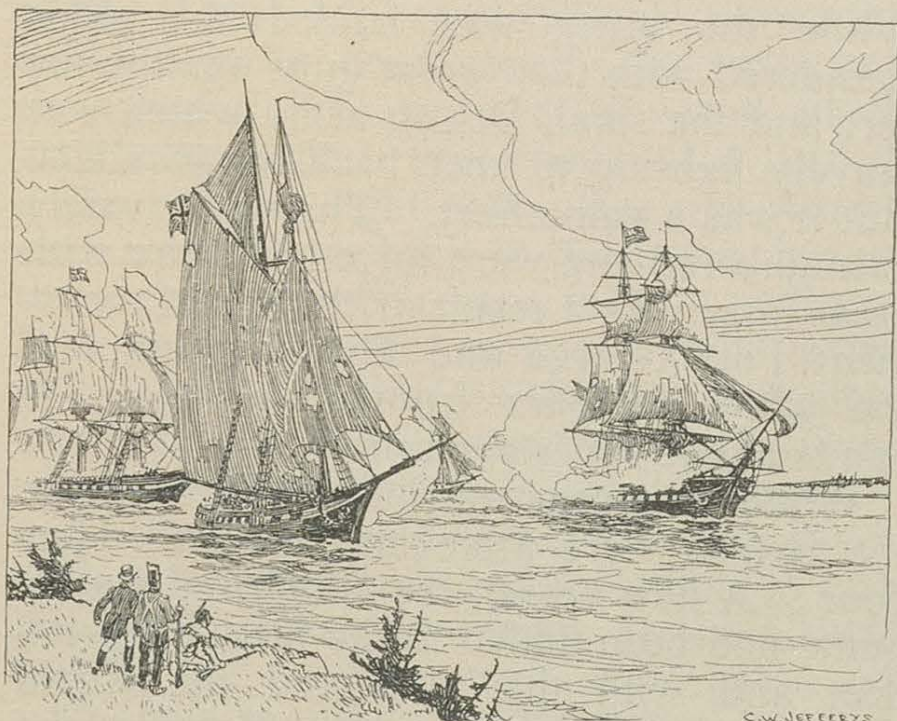
But the Americans, meanwhile, were increasing both their land forces and their fleet. In February, General Pike reached Sackett's Harbour with 5,000 men, and by the time navigation opened, had fourteen vessels ready for battle. On April 25th, 1,700 troops embarked on these vessels, which, in addition, had crews of about 1,000 men. With this strong force on board the fleet sailed for York (Toronto).

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York, at this time, was weakly defended. Although the capital of Upper Canada, it was a mere village of a few hundred inhabitants. It had a blockhouse, a fort, and some entrenchments at the entrance to the harbour, and a war vessel, the *Duke of Gloucester*, was there undergoing repairs. Sir Roger Sheaffe was in command, but, all told, he had only about 600 men with which to hold the place.

Early in the morning of April 26th, the American fleet hove in sight. It sailed past the town and landed troops near Humber Bay. They were resisted by a small force, which they quickly beat back. Meanwhile the ships took up a position in front of the fort and began bombarding the town. For five hours the long range battle went on, and then York capitulated. The Americans in this fight suffered the greatest loss through the accidental blowing-up of a powder magazine, which killed or wounded 260 of them, among them being General Pike. The town was plundered, even private property of all kinds being taken.

Chauncey returned in triumph to Sackett's Harbour, taking with him his plunder



A NAVAL ACTION ON LAKE ONTARIO IN 1813

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and the *Duke of Gloucester*. On May 27th he appeared at the mouth of the Niagara River, with a fleet of sixteen vessels bearing a large army and vast military supplies. An attack on Fort George was planned. While the army was landed the ships thundered with their great guns against the fort and the small British army which was bravely fighting to keep back the invaders. But it was a vain effort. They were vastly outnumbered and were forced to retire with great loss. As a result of this naval movement Fort George and Fort Niagara and the whole Niagara frontier fell into the hands of the American army.

While Chauncey was busy at Fort George the British were attacking Sackett's Harbour. A new vessel, the *Wolfe*, of twenty guns, had been added to the little Kingston fleet and with this ship and the *Royal George*, the *Moir*, the brig *Melville*, the schooner *Netley*, and a number of smaller craft Commodore Yeo and Sir George Prevost arrived before the American stronghold on May 27th. On the day of their arrival they met with little resistance and had the troops been sent ashore the place would have

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fallen without any loss to the British. But Sir George Prevost ordered the fleet to retire. They returned on the 29th. The commander of Sackett's Harbour believing that his stronghold must fall into the hands of the British set fire to valuable stores, the naval barracks, the *Duke of Gloucester*, and the *General Pike*, a powerful vessel which was being built. The troops were landed, a short, sharp fight took place, the Americans were driven back in confusion, but, to the amazement of Yeo and the other officers, Prevost ordered the troops to return to the ships, and the fleet sailed for Kingston. The fires that had been started on the *Duke of Gloucester* and the *General Pike* were extinguished, and the *General Pike* was saved to do important work and for a time to turn the tide of battle in favour of the United States.

On July 31st, Yeo left Kingston with supplies for Burlington. Chauncey was watching for him with a strong fleet and when the two met a sharp general action took place. The American commander trusted to his long guns and would not come into close range, while Yeo manœuvred

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his vessels in an effort to come to close quarters with his foe. Chauncey soon had enough fighting and turned tail and fled to the protection of the guns of Fort Niagara. The British raced after him and succeeded in capturing the schooners *Julia* and *Growler*. While the fight was in progress, a heavy squall occurred. Two of the American ships, the *Hamilton* and the *Scourge*, were struck full force by the blast, overturned and sank. The British sailors, by heroic efforts, saved the lives of sixteen of their crews.

On September 28th, there was another fleet action. In this fight a shot from the *General Pike* struck the *Wolfe's* topmast and carried it away. In the heat of the action a gun on the *General Pike* burst, killing or wounding more than sixty of her crew. Once more the safety-first Chauncey retired to shelter.

In October, Yeo received strong reinforcements. A fine new ship and a brig had also been completed in the Kingston shipyards. The British commander now sailed out with the hope of fighting a decisive battle, but the cautious Chauncey would not meet him and

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remained in the shelter of Sackett's Harbour. So the year 1813 closed with the British in control of Lake Ontario.

The shipyards at Kingston were busy during the winter of 1813-14 and on April 14th the two warships *Prince Regent*, fifty guns, and the *Princess Charlotte*, forty-four guns, were launched. On May 4th they were ready for battle and on that day, with five other vessels and a number of gunboats, Yeo sailed for Oswego, carrying over one thousand troops under the command of Sir Gordon Drummond.

The British fleet arrived off Oswego on the afternoon of the 5th. Gunboats were sent in to draw the fire of the batteries so that they might be located. It was the intention of General Drummond to land his force and attack the fort at eight o'clock in the evening. But as the gunboats returned from doing their work a storm sprang up and the British fleet was forced to retreat. But the American commander knew they would be back in the morning and sent out a call for militia. He also sank the schooner *Growler*, which happened to be there, to prevent it falling into the hands of the British.

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Early next morning Yeo's fleet rode proudly before Oswego. The *Prince Regent* was too big a vessel to get into close range, but the *Princess Charlotte*, the *Montreal*, and the *Niagara* were soon sending shot and shell into the American batteries. Boats were lowered and a landing force of about 700 men were towed ashore. Meanwhile a sharp fire was kept up between the fort and the ships. The *Montreal* suffered heavily, being set on fire three times by red-hot shot and having her hull pierced and her masts and rigging cut.

As soon as the force landed it drew up on the beach and made ready for the attack. A steep hill had to be climbed before the fort could be reached, but at the word of command the troops dashed forward. They were met by a hot musketry fire, but there was no stopping them and in a few minutes the enemy were in flight and they were at the very walls of the fort. Lieutenant Laurie quickly scaled the wall, with his men crowding after him. The American flag was still flying. It had been nailed to the flagstaff, but Lieutenant Hewett, of

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the Marines, climbed the pole, while exposed to musketry fire, and cut away the flag.

For about three months Yeo was able to blockade the enemy fleet in Sackett's Harbour. But the Americans, too, had been building powerful ships, and, on August 1st, Chauncey ventured into the open lake with a strong fleet, headed by the new vessels, the *Superior* and the *Mohawk*, larger and more powerfully armed than any under Yeo's command. The British ships were forced to seek shelter in Kingston where they remained until October, frequently challenged by the Americans to come out and engage in a fleet action. But Yeo could bide his time. His carpenters and riggers were working day and night to get a fine two-decker, the *St. Lawrence*, ready for action. This ship had 100 guns and was the most powerful that ever sailed on the inland waters of Canada. When Yeo led her out to battle, Chauncey fled to Sackett's Harbour and his vessels were bottled up there till the end of the war. Meanwhile Yeo controlled the lake and was able to rush troops and supplies to the heroic little

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army fighting along the Niagara frontier, and it was largely due to the good work of the British fleet that early in November the Americans were driven out of Canada.

ON LAKE ERIE

Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry was sent to Lake Erie to get a fleet capable of coping with the British vessels on the lake ready for action and take charge of naval operations. He had a difficult task. The region about Erie was a roadless wilderness and all the material, as well as the guns for the ships had to be brought from a distance of about five hundred miles. He found on his arrival two brigs and three schooners being built. He went energetically to work to bring them to completion, taking special pains with the *Lawrence* and the *Niagara*.

Captain Robert Heriot Barclay had been sent to Lake Erie by Sir James Yeo to take command of the small British fleet there. He reached Amherstburg in June and was greatly disheartened when he viewed the situation. He then got definite information of the great preparations the Americans were making to meet him on equal

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terms, and as he examined his own small fleet and their equipment his heart sank within him. His hope of success lay in a vessel being built, the *Detroit*, but until it was launched and made ready for battle he must keep the enemy fleet bottled up in Presqu'île Harbour, and so with the *Queen Charlotte*, *Hunter*, *Lady Prevost*, *Little Belt*, and *Chippewa*, in storm and shine, he maintained the blockade.

Meanwhile, Perry had been working might and main to complete the *Lawrence* and *Niagara*. The British navy had lately driven the United States war vessels from the Atlantic. They were locked up in safe harbours and many of their men, experienced in naval warfare, were sent to Perry, giving him a decided superiority in man-power over Barclay. Equipping the vessels was not so easy, but by the end of July he had everything ready and the two brigs were launched and fitted out for action; all he now waited for was a chance to slip them over the bar. But as he swept the broad lake with watchful eye he caught glimpses of Barclay's vessels, ever on the alert, and he knew that the moment one of

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his vessels showed its prow in the open lake British guns would roar against it.

But Barclay was to make a fatal mistake. About August 1st, for some reason, he sailed away from Presqu'île, leaving Captain Finnis to keep up the blockade. A severe storm came up and Finnis, fearing that his vessels would be driven on the south shore, retreated to Canadian waters. This gave Perry the chance he wanted. The *Lawrence* and *Niagara* both drew too much water to sail over the bar, but by means of floats and by taking off their guns and heavier equipment he was able to lessen their draft by three feet. To his great joy, after long and hard work, he succeeded in getting both of them to the open lake.

The tables were now turned. The Americans had control of the lake and could prevent all supplies by water from reaching the British army, under Colonel Procter, on the Detroit frontier. Each day Procter found his situation becoming more serious. There was a powerful American army within striking distance; his own force was weak and he was short of supplies of all kinds. The Indians had gathered about

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him in great numbers—warriors, squaws, and papooses—and they had to be fed.

By the beginning of September the situation was such that Barclay made up his mind, at the first favorable opportunity, to set out to meet Perry, who, in Put-in-Bay, was eagerly awaiting battle. The *Detroit* was still in far from finished condition. To make her ready for the fight some of the long guns of Fort Malden had been put on board. She had a few men of experience in naval warfare, the rest were soldiers, lake sailors, and even a few Indians.

Early in the morning of September 10th, the watchful Perry saw the British fleet approaching Put-in-Bay under a favourable breeze. He at once got his vessels under way and beat out of the bay. As he cleared the land the wind shifted and gave him the advantage and, getting his vessels into line-of-battle, he bore down on Barclay's fleet. But the British commander drew up his vessel in a fine formation and awaited the attack. The Americans had nine vessels to his six; they had 532 men to his 440; and they could throw a much heavier broadside.

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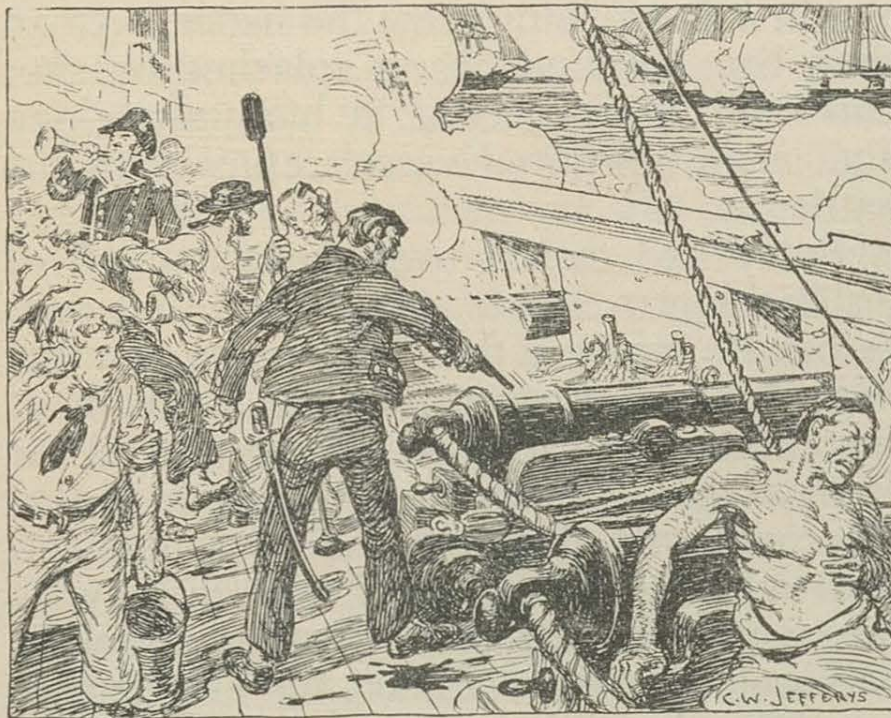
Noon had arrived before the fleets were sufficiently close together to come into action. The *Detroit* first opened fire on the *Lawrence* and soon the battle was on in earnest. The roar of the guns was carried to the anxious inhabitants of Amherstburg, who, expecting great things from their little fleet, had been eagerly listening for sounds of battle. On the American shore from every good observation point many people watched the progress of the vessels, soon to be shrouded from their gaze in the thick smoke of the fight.

Barclay was fighting at a disadvantage. He was even without matchlocks for his guns and had to discharge them by flashing pistols at the touchholes, but nevertheless he succeeded in making great havoc on the *Lawrence*, Perry's flagship. Guns were knocked over, her upper works were smashed, round shot crashed through her, lines and braces were cut, and her sails were torn to shreds. For an hour and a half this long range battle went on, Perry struggling to bring his van into close quarters with the British.

The *Detroit* was a staunch ship and stood

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not only the fire of the *Lawrence* but also an attack from the long range guns of the *Caledonia*. Barclay began to feel that victory was within his grasp. The *Lawrence*



THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE

was practically a wreck. Whole gun crews had been slain and she was so battered that she was no longer navigable. Meanwhile her sister ship, the *Niagara*, Captain Jesse Elliott, for some strange reason had prac-

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tically kept out of the fight. She was uninjured. Perry saw that he must soon pull down his flag; but he decided to try to save the situation by a desperate act. He would desert the *Lawrence*, board the *Niagara* and in a fresh ship renew the battle. In an open boat, through water splashed by shot and shell, he succeeded in his undertaking and in an uninjured vessel returned to the battle.

Perry had turned over the command of his flagship to Lieutenant Yarnell, but even before he reached the *Niagara* he saw the flag of the *Lawrence* lowered in token of surrender. But such was the plight of the *Detroit* that Barclay was unable to board the conquered ship nor had he a boat left with which he could send a prize crew to take possession of her. Barclay, himself, had been severely wounded, his first lieutenant, Mr. Garland, had been killed and the *Detroit* was as badly battered as the *Lawrence*.

The *Queen Charlotte* had been having a hard time of it. She had been attacked at long range by the guns of the *Niagara* and two schooners, and her commander, Captain

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Finnis, being short of long guns, could make only an ineffective reply. Finnis tried hard to bring his vessel into close range, but he was struck down by a round shot, and about the same time his first lieutenant, Mr. Stokoe, was mortally wounded, and Lieutenant Irvine, a brave officer, but with little experience, had to take charge of the vessel.

There had been a brief lull in the fight but the flag of the *Lawrence* was once more raised. The *Niagara* was brought into action and the *Detroit* was swept with a hurricane of fire. The British vessels had received such a severe pounding that they were quite unfit to beat off this new attack.

At ten minutes to three the *Niagara* swept through the British line with the *Lady Prevost*, *Little Belt* and *Chippewa* on her port side, and the *Detroit*, *Queen Charlotte* and *Hunter* on the starboard, firing broadsides as she passed these vessels. Barclay had foreseen the possibility of such tactics and tried to bring the *Detroit* about so as to present his broadside to the *Niagara*. But a fatal accident occurred. The *Detroit* collided with the *Queen Charlotte*, the vessels became entangled, and before they

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could be separated both were swept with a destructive fire not only from the *Niagara* but from the *Somers*, *Porcupine*, *Tigress* and *Caledonia* as well. The odds were too great, it was useless to resist longer. The *Queen Charlotte* was the first to surrender, then the *Detroit* lowered her flag, to be quickly followed by the *Lady Prevost* and the *Hunter*. The *Chippewa* and *Little Belt* had suffered least and tried to escape, but the *Scorpion* and *Trippe* went in pursuit and they, too, were compelled to surrender.

ON LAKE CHAMPLAIN

In April, 1814, Bonaparte abdicated. England had no longer to put forth all her strength in Europe and was able to send quite a large force of men to Canada. The British authorities now decided to carry the war into northern New York and instructed Sir George Prevost to take the offensive. He had under his command a force of over 11,000 men, many of them veterans of Wellington's great Spanish campaigns. The army assembled in Lower Canada and in three brigades, under Generals Robinson, Power and Brisbane, set out from Odell-

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town with the intention of attacking the headquarters of the American army on Lake Champlain.

On the approach of Prevost's army the United States forces retreated to a strongly fortified position about Plattsburg and awaited the attack. There was opposed to Prevost a force of about 1,500 regulars and 3,200 militia. They made but a feeble effort to check the British advance, content to take shelter in their forts, blockhouses and a stone mill. Had Prevost when he got in touch with them acted with the boldness of Brock before Detroit, the entire American force might have been captured with but little loss of life. But the over-cautious British leader decided to wait until the naval force on Lake Champlain, then stationed at Isle La Motte, under Captain Downie, was ready to make a joint attack with him.

Commodore Macdonough had under his command the ship *Saratoga*, the brig *Eagle*, the schooner *Ticonderoga*, the sloop *Preble* and ten gunboats. This fleet carried eighty-six guns. Captain Downie's fleet consisted of the ship *Confiance*, which had just been

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launched and was far from ready for action, the brig *Linnet*, the sloops *Chubb* and *Finch*, and twelve gunboats. These boats carried eighty-seven guns but as many of the guns were of small size the Americans could throw much heavier broadsides.

Macdonough had drawn up his vessels in a line inside Cumberland Head at the entrance to Plattsburg Bay, one end of his line being protected by a strong battery on Cumberland Head, the other by a shoal and a battery on Crab Island. He had no fear of having his line turned; riding securely at anchor he could force his enemy to make a head-on attack.

Shortly after daybreak on the morning of September 11th, Downie bore down rapidly on the United States fleet. He fired blank charges from his guns as a signal to Prevost that he was about to attack the enemy. This signal had been agreed upon and Sir George was supposed to move his army forward and at once begin an attack on the land positions of the foe, but for some reason he took no action and left Downie to attack Macdonough's vessels without giving him any assistance.

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When Downie reached the entrance to Plattsburg Bay, he hove to and waited for his slower-moving galleys to come up. Then he gave the signal for battle and bore down on the American line, steering directly for the *Saratoga*. If he could once put that powerful ship out of action victory would be his. As he approached the *Saratoga* her long guns opened on him, raking his vessel fore and aft and he could make no reply. However, with twenty-four-pounder shot sweeping his decks he boldly advanced. He hoped to get close to his enemy, but so hot was the fire to which he was exposed that he was compelled to come to anchor and swing his vessel broadside to the *Saratoga* when still a quarter of a mile from her. Before he was able to fire his first broadside two of his anchors had been shot away and many of his crew killed or wounded. Now that he was in a favorable position he opened a destructive fire on Macdonough's flagship and soon had disabled the entire battery on her exposed side. For a time the *Saratoga's* guns were silent and it looked as if victory were in the grasp of

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the British. Unfortunately, early in the fight a round shot from the *Saratoga* struck a twenty-four-pounder gun on the *Confiance*, throwing it against the British commander, killing him almost instantly.

The *Saratoga* was for the moment out of action, but her commander had prepared for such a possibility as the destruction of her battery on either side. He speedily swung his vessel about before the *Confiance* could close in on him. She now opened up with a murderous fire from the battery on her uninjured side. The *Confiance* tried, but was unable to swing about and could offer but a feeble resistance to the fresh guns of her foe. One half of her crew had been killed or wounded, nearly all the guns on her engaged side were dismounted, her masts were "splintered untill they looked like bundles of matches," her rigging was cut, and her sails torn to shreds. To continue the fight was a hopeless task and two hours and a half after she had fired her first gun she lowered her flag.

The other vessels of the little fleet, although gallantly handled, had fared as badly. The *Finch* attempted to grapple with the

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Ticonderoga but ran aground on a shoal and became helpless. Pounded by the guns of the Crab Island battery and the *Ticonderoga* she, too, was forced to lower her flag. The *Linnet* bravely attacked the *Eagle* and drove her to the shelter of the *Ticonderoga*. She then turned her attention to the American gunboats at the end of the line, drove them off and then went to the assistance of the *Confiance* in her death grapple with the *Saratoga*. When the flagship struck, brave Captain Pring, the *Linnet's* commander, kept his flag flying and continued to work his guns. But his vessel was soon in a sinking condition and when his lower decks were under water he knew it was useless to continue the fight and struck his flag. The *Chubb*, early in the battle had had her bowsprit, boom, and cable shot away; becoming unmanageable she drifted into the American line and had to lower her flag.

The British gunboats had been of little service in the action. Seven of them never got into the fight and the others ran for safety when the larger vessels surrendered.

When the naval battle came to such a

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disastrous end for the British, Sir George Prevost instead of storming the American position at Plattsburg marched his forces back to Canada to the disgust of the seasoned veterans under his command.

ON LAKE HURON

Lake Huron was likewise to have its experience of naval warfare during the War of 1812. In 1795 Lord Dorchester had established a small fort on the Island of St. Joseph, lying in the strait between Lake Huron and Lake Superior, to serve as a check on the American force stationed on Mackinac Island. Captain Roberts was in command of a small body of men at Fort St. Joseph when war was declared. Brock before setting out for Detroit sent word to Roberts to attempt the capture of the American fort on Mackinac Island. Roberts did not delay a moment. He had at hand forty-five officers and men of the 16th Royal Battalion. He collected a body of 180 Canadians, sturdy boatmen trained in the service of the North West and Hudson's Bay companies. In addition 393 Indians joined his force.

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Roberts reached Mackinac on the morning of July 17th, landed his force and had a gun in a position to command the fort almost before the Americans knew of his arrival. He at once sent in a summons to the commander to surrender. It was useless to resist and the fort with its garrison of sixty-one officers and men, seven cannon, and a large quantity of valuable furs, fell into the hands of the British.

In July, 1814, a large American force set out to sweep the British from Lake Huron. The troops, over 1,000 in number, embarked in five vessels, carrying forty-six guns and manned by over four hundred men. They sailed first for the post at St. Joseph's Island. They found it had been abandoned and out of spite burned the few houses there. A party under Major Holmes was then sent to Sault Ste. Marie to plunder the North West Company's establishment. With three or four exceptions the men were all absent and most of the valuable stores had been moved to a place of safety. The Americans had no respect for private property. They broke into the houses, took clothing, furniture, everything of the slightest value. Loading

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their plunder on their ships and taking several North West employees with them as prisoners, they set sail for Mackinac.

The American fleet reached the island on July 26th. They seemed to fear the long guns of the fort and, until August 4th, cruised about looking for a favourable place to land. They then drew up their ships to the east of the island, having decided to attack the fort from the rear. When his guns were manned Colonel McDouall, the commander of Fort Mackinac, had only about 140 men, of whom fifty were Indians, with which he could venture out to beat back any force that might land. It was a case of ten to one, but when the Americans did land under the protection of the guns of their fleet, Colonel McDouall did not hesitate. He boldly ventured out and took up a strong position on a ridge which had a clear space in front. Here he stationed two guns, a three-pounder and a six-pounder.

The enemy moved forward with great caution. McDouall began to play on them with his guns, but as he had no experienced gunners the shots went wild and did little more than alarm the advancing force.

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However, he managed to check the advance in his immediate front. But his left flank was threatened. The Indians there were falling back. The right flank, too, was in danger; but nothing daunted McDouall sent some of the men from his front to the left and right and at the same time Captain Crawford rallied the Indians. A dashing attack was made, the enemy were thrown into confusion and rushed pell mell for their boats, leaving seventeen dead and a number of wounded on the field of battle. Their loss would have been greater if the British could have pursued them to the water's edge, but they were able to embark under the shelter of the guns on the vessels.

The Americans decided to give over the attempt to capture Fort Mackinac and sailed away. Three of the vessels, the *Niagara*, the *Tigress* and *Scorpion*, were sent to the Nautawasaga River where the schooner *Nancy*, with a rich cargo of furs, was known to be lying under the shelter of a blockhouse. Lieutenant Worsley and twenty-three seamen were with the *Nancy*, and when the enemy war vessels were seen in the distance, the furs and other valuable

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stores were sent up the French River in canoes and the men retired to the blockhouse, which mounted one six-pounder and had two twenty-four-pounder carronades before its gate. The guns did good work for a time, but the bombardment from the ships and from a howitzer, which had been landed, became so heavy that Worsley felt that he must give up the fight. A shell had struck the *Nancy*, Worsley completed its work by blowing up the vessel. He also spiked his guns and blew up the blockhouse before beating a retreat.

The *Niagara* now sailed away for Detroit and left the *Tigress* and *Scorpion* to blockade the Nautawasaga to prevent supplies from going forward to Mackinac, thus hoping to starve out the little garrison there. But the two American ships were not good blockaders and in a few days sailed away for St. Joseph. As soon as they were out of sight Lieutenant Worsley manned his boats and hastened to Mackinac. He reached the island on August 31st with the news that the two American armed schooners were near St. Joseph.

It was now decided to attempt their cap-

NAVAL WARFARE, 1812-14

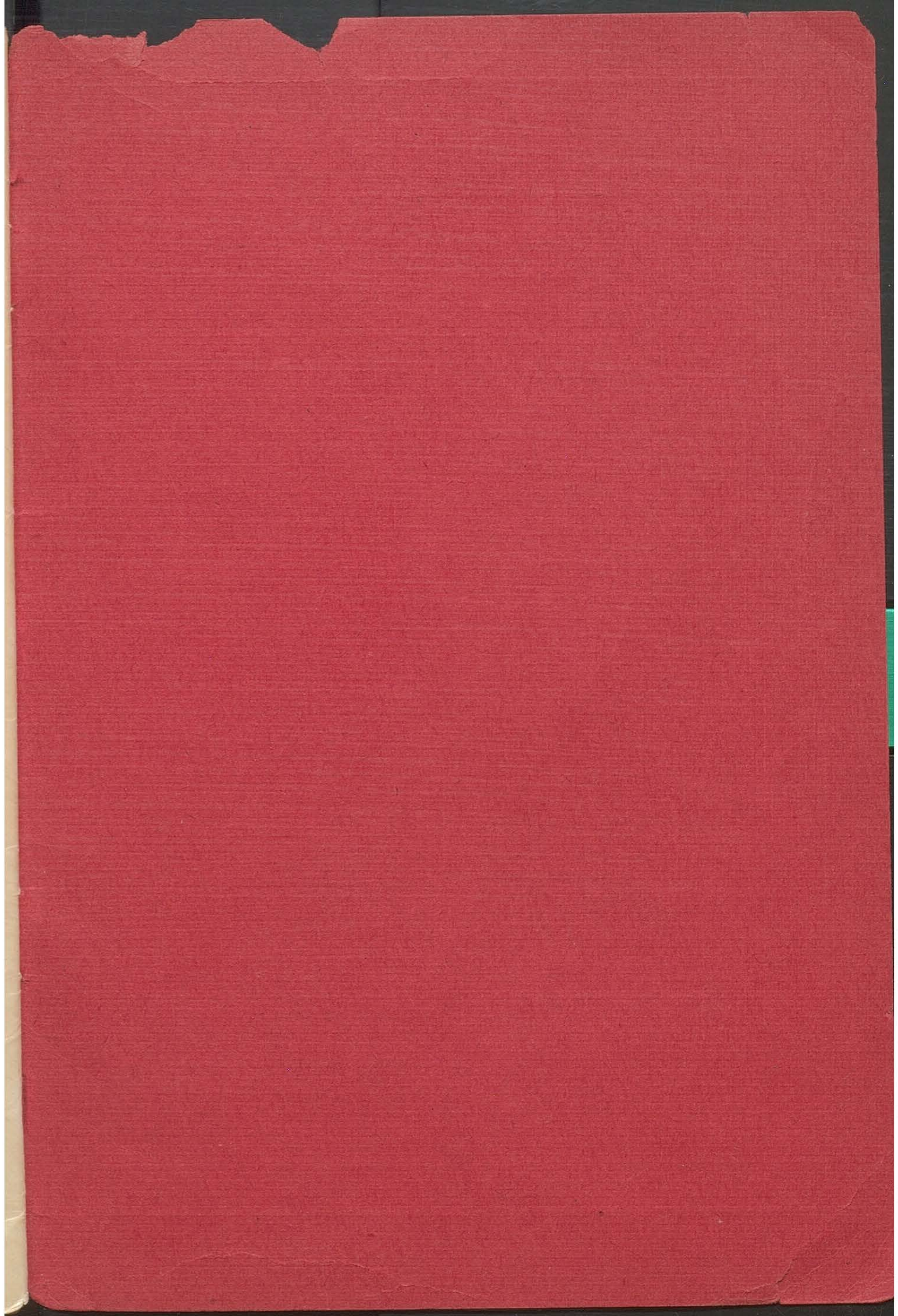
ture. Four boats set out on the daring adventure. One was manned by nineteen seamen under Lieutenant Worsley; the three others by sixty officers and men under Lieutenant Bulger. They carried, besides, two artillerymen in charge of a three-pounder and a six-pounder, five civilians of the Indian Department, and three Indian chiefs, in all ninety-two persons. The expedition was accompanied by a number of Indians in canoes, but they took no part in the fighting.

The boats arrived at St. Mary's Strait on the evening of September 2nd and kept a sharp lookout for the enemy. All next day the troops hid behind rocks and trees on the shore. About six in the evening they saw the *Tigress* six miles away. In the gathering darkness they pulled towards her and by nine o'clock were within one hundred yards of their prey. They were observed by a sentinel, who hailed them. They made no reply, but bent all the harder to their oars. The *Tigress* then opened on them with her twenty-four-pounder gun and volleys of musketry, but within five minutes they had boarded her.

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On the following morning the prisoners were sent ashore and the *Tigress*, still flying the United States flag as a decoy, went in search of the *Scorpion*, which was said to be anchored about fifteen miles away. . Towards evening the unsuspecting *Scorpion* was sighted coming down the lake, seemingly with the intention of joining her sister ship. But she came to anchor and the British decided not to attempt her capture until morning.

Shortly after daylight the *Tigress* was headed for the *Scorpion*. The United States flag flew at her peak and her crew kept out of sight. She managed to get within ten yards of the *Scorpion* before her true character was discovered. Then her crew leaped to their feet, gave a rousing British cheer, poured a hot musketry volley into the cowering American crew. The next instant the two vessels were side by side. The British swarmed on the deck of their foe and the vessel was theirs. This daring feat ended the attempts of the United States against Mackinac and peace reigned on Lake Huron.



THE RYERSON CANADIAN HISTORY READERS

1. HEROES

- 1A. †Sieur de Maisonneuve—*Lorne Pierce*
- 1B. *Count de Frontenac—*Helen E. Williams*
- 1C. Pierre le Moyne d'Iberville—*Norman McLeod Rogers*
- 1D. *Marquis de Montcalm—*J. C. Sutherland*
- 1E. †General James Wolfe—*J. C. Sutherland*
- 1F. Sir Guy Carleton—*A. L. Burt*
- 1G. †Tecumseh—*Lloyd Roberts*
- 1H. *Sir Isaac Brock—*T. G. Marquis*
- 1I. The Northwest Mounted Police—*C. F. Hamilton*

2. HEROINES

- 2A. *Madame La Tour—*Mabel Burkholder*
- 2B. †Madeline de Verchères—*E. T. Raymond*
- 2C. Laura Secord—*Della Dingle*
- 2D. Marguerite de Bourgeois—*F. O. Call*
- 2E. Sisters of St. Boniface
- 2F. The Strickland Sisters—*Blanche Hume*

3. EXPLORERS AND COLONISTS

- 3A. Lief Ericson
- 3B. †Jacques Cartier—*J. C. Sutherland*
- 3C. †Samuel de Champlain—*Adrian Macdonald*
- 3D. Hebert: The First Canadian Farmer—*Julia Jarvis*
- 3E. Robert Cavalier de la Salle—*Lawrence Dare*
- 3F. Henry Hudson—*Lawrence J. Burpee*
- 3G. Alexander Henry and Peter Bond—*Lawrence J. Burpee*
- 3H. Anthony Hendry and Cocking—*Lawrence J. Burpee*
- 3I. Pierre Radisson—*Lawrence J. Burpee*
- 3J. *Sir Alexander Mackenzie—*Adrian Macdonald*
- 3K. Samuel Hearne—*Lloyd Roberts*
- 3L. Simon Fraser
- 3M. Lord Selkirk—*Capt. William Martin*
- 3N. Sir John Franklin—*M. H. Long*

- 3O. †Captain Cook—*Mabel Burkholder*
- 3P. David Thompson—*M. H. Long*
- 3Q. La Verendrye—*G. J. Reeve*
- 3R. Capt. George Vancouver—*Judge F. W. Howay*

4. GREAT BATTLES AND SIEGES

- 4A. *Sieges of Quebec: French Régime
- 4B. *Sieges of Quebec: British Régime
- 4C. Louisburg—*Grace McLeod Rogers*
- 4D. †Pontiac and the Siege of Detroit—*T. G. Marquis*
- 4E. *Naval Battles on the Great Lakes—*T. G. Marquis*
- 4F. *Battlefields of 1813—*T. G. Marquis*
- 4G. Battlefields of 1814—*T. G. Marquis*
- 4H. The Battle of Batoche—*H. A. Kennedy*

5. MASTER BUILDERS

- 5A. Thomas Chandler Haliburton—*Lorne Pierce*
- 5B. †Sir John Graves Simcoe—*C. A. Girdler*
- 5C. Joseph Howe—*D. C. Harvey*
- 5D. Sir John A. Macdonald—*George R. Locke*
- 5E. Sir Alexander Tilloch Galt
- 5F. Lord Strathcona—*H. A. Kennedy*
- 5G. Sir Wilfrid Laurier—*T. G. Marquis*
- 5H. Sir Sanford Fleming—*Lawrence J. Burpee*
- 5I. The Hudson's Bay Company—*Robert Watson*
- 5J. The North-west Company—*M. H. Long*
- 5K. †The Building of the C.P.R.—*H. A. Kennedy*
- 5L. James Douglas—*W. N. Sage*
- 5M. Robinson and Begbie—*Judge F. W. Howay*
- 5N. Thomas D'Arcy McGee—*Isabel Skelton*
- 5O. George Brown—*Chester Martin*
- 5P. Sir George E. Cartier

6. MISSIONARIES

- 6A. Père Jogues—*Isabel Skelton*
- 6B. Jean de Breboeuf—*Isabel Skelton*
- 6C. †Father Lacombe—*H. A. Kennedy*
- 6D. Rev. John Black—*E. K. Marshall*
- 6E. Rev. James Evans—*Lorne Pierce*
- 6F. †Rev. George MacDougall—*Lorne Pierce*
- 6G. Father Morice—*Thomas O'Hagan*
- 6H. Bishop Bompas—*"Janey Canuck"*

Those marked with an asterisk are already published and available. Those marked with a dagger will shortly be ready. Price, 10c. each, postage 2c. extra.